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SECURITY INFORMATION

History of the Office of Operations

INTRODUCTION

I. Description and Documentation

This history of the Office of Operations was prepared during January and February 1952 as a working draft for the use of the CIA Historian. It was written by various staff members of the Office and its three divisions, and is presented, without extensive editing, as a basis for further historical research rather than as the definitive history of the organization. Although an attempt was made to provide documentation for the material whenever possible, reference to official records was limited to those files available within the Office, and no effort was made to collate or reconcile such data with records held elsewhere in the Agency. It is therefore possible that discrepancies may become apparent if, for example, the figures given for T/O and staffing of the Office at different periods are compared with similar figures maintained by other Agency Offices and Staffs using a slightly different recording system. In addition, the source-material for the period prior to January 1948 was in some cases inadequate, since detailed records were either not made at the time or were subsequently dispersed or destroyed, as by the pre-CIA parent organizations of the FBID. Missing material has been pieced together from indirect evidence, supplemented by the memories or impressions of employees whose service dates back to the period in question. Exact dates or figures given in the text or Appendices are, however, based on official records and can be documented.

II. Organization of the Material

As indicated by the table of contents, each major activity of the Office is treated in one chapter, and the chapters have been bound separately for purposes of convenience. Each divisional chapter is organized roughly along the same lines and the material is presented in accordance with the following outline:

- Section A: Pre-CIG Period - a brief history of the activity before transfer to the Agency, or of the background of the function as handled by other agencies.
- Section B: Inception or Transfer to CIG - an outline with dates, documentation and discussion of the early CIG/CIA organization of the activity, including problems of transfer or of the origin of the function within the Agency.
- Section C: Growth and Development - chronological discussion of the development and expansion of the activity, with facts, dates, and authorities for major changes in organization, functions, and responsibilities (development from the point of view of organization).
- Section D: Field Organization - dates of activation, brief history, growth, and special problems of each field bureau, office, or resident agent.

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Section E: Sources, Coverage, and Production - chronological discussion of the information coverage and out-put of the division; increases in available sources and number of reports produced; changes in emphasis in exploitation or coverage; reactions to consumer demands, types of publications issued or abandoned—with dates—, (development from the point of view of function).

Section F: Special Divisional Functions and Problems - historical discussion of specialized aspects of divisional operations, substantive problems, and subjects peculiar to each division.

Appendices: Tabular material documenting the narrative or showing the growth and development of the activity. Each chapter has the following three Appendices and as many others as seemed desirable:

Appendix I - Organization Charts

Appendix II - T/O and Strength as of 1 January each year from 1947 through 1952.

Appendix III - List of Executive Personnel (with dates of tenure of each post).

III. Limitations

Since this history was designed purely for internal use and as a preliminary draft to assist the CIA Historian, it does not discuss such general topics as the place of collection in the intelligence process, the amount of the intelligence information which is obtainable from overt sources, the difference between overt and covert collection operations, or the various basic techniques involved in the exploitation of different types of sources. It assumes that the reader is familiar not only with the current organization and operations of the Agency, but with the functions of other intelligence agencies, inter-departmental relationships, and with intelligence principles and procedures in general.

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